

## MINUTES OF TTF CG MEETING

To: Distribution

From: Bob Hunnicutt, Tower Coordinator, Columbia Telecommunications

A meeting of the Telecommunications Transmission Facility Coordinating Group (TTF CG) was held on May 8, 2002. The following people were in attendance:

### MEMBERS

Jane Lawton OCA (240) 777-3724

Michael Ma M-NCPPC (301) 495-4595

Pat Hanehan MCPS (301) 279-3609

Eric Carzon OMB (240) 777-2763

Dave Niblock DPS (240) 777-6252

Willem Van Aller DIST (240) 777-2994

### STAFF

Amy Rowan OCA (240) 777-3684

Margie Williams OCA (240) 777-3762

Robert Hunnicutt CTC (410) 964-5700

Kamal Johari CTC (410) 964-5700

### OTHER ATTENDEES

Bill O'Brien VoiceStream (443) 570-1032

Steve Weber VoiceStream (571) 277-0235

Carolyn Mitchell Cingular

Tom Carroll Cole, Raywid

M.G. Diamond for Verizon Wireless

John Steele Verizon Wireless

Mike Winberg Darnestown Assoc.

Discussion Item - Willem Van Aller's Retirement: Willem Van Aller announced that he is retiring from County service and this would be his last TTF CG meeting. Ms. Lawton and the TTF CG members expressed appreciation for all of his hard work on tower issues, applauded his long and valuable career with the County, and wished him well in his retirement.

Action Item: Approval of April 10, 2002 minutes: Pat Hanehan noted that he had corrections to the minutes, which he provided in written form to Amy Rowan. Eric Carzon moved the minutes be approved as amended. Michael Ma seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Action: Consent Agenda Item:

1. VoiceStream Wireless application to replace 3 existing antennas and add 3 new antennas (one per sector) all mounted on new extension poles on an existing WSSC water tank located at 17710 Buehler Road in Olney (Application #200205-01).

2. AT&T Wireless application to attach antennas at the 160' level of an existing 180' monopole located at the Dickerson Auto Center at 22210 Dickerson Road in Dickerson (Application #200204-02).

Motion: Eric Carzon moved the consent agenda applications be recommended. Dave Niblock seconded the motion and it was approved with Pat Hanehan abstaining on the AT&T application.

Action Item: Verizon Wireless application to attach six panel antennas at the 270' level of an existing 300' PEPCO Substation #118 lattice tower located at 17101 Germantown Road in Germantown (Application #200204-01).

Bob Hunnicutt summarized the application. He noted that normally he would have included this by-right attachment to an existing structure in the consent agenda, but given the history of Verizon's attempts to provide service in this area, he wanted to make a few comments for the benefit of the group members and representatives from the Darnestown area who had been attending the TTFCG meetings for quite some time.

He stated that this site, located on Route 118, is in lieu of the Butler School application which Verizon has withdrawn with submission of this application. He noted that this is the fourth attempt for Verizon to site antennas in this area; the first three were proposed new monopoles, all of which generated significant community concern. He also noted that because the PEPCO communications tower is farther north than the Butler School, the proposed attachment to it will leave gaps in coverage south of Route 28 which would have been covered from the Butler School site. He noted that Verizon stated in its application that it may need to revisit this issue at a later date to seek an additional location for antennas to serve those areas.

Mike Winberg asked if Verizon knew for sure that it would need a second facility in the Darnestown area. John Steele stated that it was likely that they would need additional antennas to adequately serve those areas south and west of Route 28, but at this time, he could not say for certain. Mr. Winberg noted that the Butler School monopole was proposed to be 180' tall, and asked that if the PEPCO site would serve most of Route 118, and a second monopole was deemed necessary, would it have to be as tall as the one proposed at the Butler School. John Steele responded that theoretically, since the service area to be covered would be smaller than the area originally intended to be served by the Butler School monopole, it may not need to be as tall; but again, he could not state for certain until he knew the specific coverage and service from the PEPCO site once it is activated. Mr. Winberg stated that the Darnestown Civic Association approved of this site because it was an attachment to an existing structure, which they considered a much better alternative to a new monopole in the community. He stated that if other carriers needed coverage in that area, he would encourage them to seek the use of the PEPCO tower as well. Jane Lawton agreed that this is a much better alternative, and stated that co-location was exactly what the TTFCG encourages. She noted that it was, in part, through the efforts of the TTFCG that PEPCO opened up use of its facilities for commercial carriers. Mr. Winberg commended the work of the TTFCG and was very pleased that Verizon had decided to co-locate, and expressed his gratitude to all on behalf of the community.

Motion: Eric Carzon moved the application be recommended. Willem Van Aller seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Discussion Item - Meeting Dates: Bob Hunnicutt distributed proposed dates for TTFCG meetings through the end of 2002. After a brief discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the meeting dates would be accepted as proposed, with the exception of changing the time for the July 3 meeting to 11:00 a.m.

Discussion Item - Legislative Update: Jane Lawton stated there had not been any new action on the legislative initiatives, which included three major issues. The first involved a fee structure; the second involved height limitations, spacing between facilities, and setback requirements; and the last was a requirement for property owners to jointly apply for a Special Exception. She asked carriers to comment on considerations for fee structures.

Willem Van Aller asked if the fee structure was intended to include County overhead. Ms. Lawton stated it was not and that it was basically intended to recoup outside consultant fees. Mr. Van Aller stated that those fees were presently averaging about \$10,000 per month. He added that he believed it was important to come up with some sort of a sliding scale, depending upon the nature and size of the proposed facility. For example, he said it was one level of effort to review an application to simply change the size of panel antennas on an existing structure, and quite another level of effort to review an application as complicated as the recent Maryland Public Television application in terms of not only consultant assistance but the time and energy of the TTFCG members.

Jim Michal asked if fees would be assessed against public agencies. Ms. Lawton replied that they would not be assessing fees to public agencies. Mr. Michal stated that he believed that the costs associated for reviewing public agency applications should not be included in calculating assessment fees to private carriers. Mr. Michal also stated that he believed that for co-location, to simply get a site into the TTFCG database did not require any detailed engineering review, and he suggested that the County could charge a flat fee of approximately \$150, as Prince George's County charges. He added that Prince George's County charges

\$500 for an application for a new structure. Jane Lawton commented that she was not seeking comment from carriers today with regard to what the fee amount should be, but that she wanted comments on considerations the County should include in determining the fee. She stated that some jurisdictions charge an annual fee as well as an application fee. Mr. Van Aller stated that perhaps it could be tied to the cost of the structure. Mr. Michal stated that amount would be difficult to assess, and suggested that a flat fee was more appropriate. Ms. Lawton agreed, but said she thought there should be tiers of fees, depending on the nature of the application. Mr. Van Aller suggested that a 500' television tower should pay more than a simple by-right attachment to water tanks, as an example. Mr. Michal stated that he believed that there should be a flat fee, regardless of whether it is a 100' or 500' new facility. Dave Niblock suggested the use of a flat fee per antenna. Mr. Van Aller added that he thought it was important to consider a minimum fee that would cover the consultant fees. He said that perhaps three fees would be appropriate: one for by-right attachments, one where a detailed engineering review was required, and one for a freestanding structure.

Amy Rowan asked if anyone had a sense of how many applications had not been constructed after having been through the TTFCCG process. Dave Niblock stated that the Tower Coordinator had asked him for that information but he had not been able to provide it. Bob Hunnicutt explained that if consideration of a fee based on whether or not an application actually gets constructed, he reiterated the suggestion at the last meeting made by Lee Afflerbach, which was for the County to tailor its fees in a similar fee structure as what the FCC utilizes. That structure includes an application fee, a processing fee, and a fee when the permit is finally granted.

Jane Lawton asked if the carriers had any comment about the height limitations in the proposed ordinance. Jim Michal stated that he thought the height should be 199' with a waiver for increasing the height because 199' is typically the maximum height any of the carriers would require for a cellular monopole.

Michael Ma stated that even if there was a waiver, the Board of Appeals must have a basis upon which to make certain findings in granting a waiver. Jane Lawton stated that she believed that Ms. Praisner's intent in regard to setting a maximum height was to encourage shorter monopoles in the up county areas, where they would be more visible. She stated that the 150' height was perhaps an arbitrary height and could have been lower, but that the intent of the text amendment was to encourage shorter tower facilities in rural areas. Willem Van Aller added that regardless of tower height, the environmental impact differs with each site. He stated that in some cases, a 150' structure may be well concealed, while in other areas it may be plainly visible. He stated that the County's Sangamore Road siting is an example of that scenario, as the pole is not very noticeable but is quite a large facility. Michael Ma stated that in order to grant a waiver, the Board of Appeals would have to set certain conditions in order to approve a waiver, and those conditions would also have to be developed as part of the text amendment.

M.G. Diamond stated that if the goal is to encourage shorter monopoles in those areas, it would be important for the County to consider making shorter monopoles in those areas by-right structures. He stated that if a carrier needs to go through the Special Exception process, they are going to attempt to attain the greatest coverage and best facility they can because the process is so expensive.

Mr. Van Aller stated that the policy question was whether the County wants one tall monopole or several shorter monopoles. He added that to have a single tall structure with many antennas attached to it looks much worse than a single carrier facility. He mentioned the broadcast towers in Washington, D.C. as an example of a facility that has hundreds of antennas attached to it and is very unsightly.

Jim Michal stated that if there was a distinct distance separation between facilities, it might eliminate those facilities as sites for co-location. He said he believed that the facility separation aspect of this text amendment change should be eliminated. Mr. Van Aller asked what was the basis for the separation of facilities. Bob Hunnicutt stated that he recalled it was to preclude development of tower "farms". Michael Ma noted that the County zoning text already has limitations on the number of similar Special Exceptions within the same general area.

With regard to the aspect of the owner being a co-applicant for a Special Exception, Jim Michal stated that it puts an undo burden on the owner and makes it difficult to subdivide the property at a later date. M.G. Diamond added that there was considerable discussion regarding that proposed language regarding owners as co-applicants at the last Planning Commission meeting. He said the recommendations should have language

to correct the issues which gave rise to this zoning text change.

Discussion Item - Board of Appeals Administrative Approval at the Baptist Home: Jim Michal announced that the Board of Appeals recently approved an administrative change to enlarge the ground space at the Baptist Home monopole. He wanted to recognize Michael Ma and express appreciation for his help and the help of the neighboring residents who wrote in support of that change.

The next meeting of the TTFCG is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12, 2002 at 2:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room #225 of the COB.